

English 509: Seminar in Classical Rhetoric: Rhetoric and Empire

Dr. Mike Edwards

Tuesdays 2:55–5:25

Office hours Mondays 2:00–4:30

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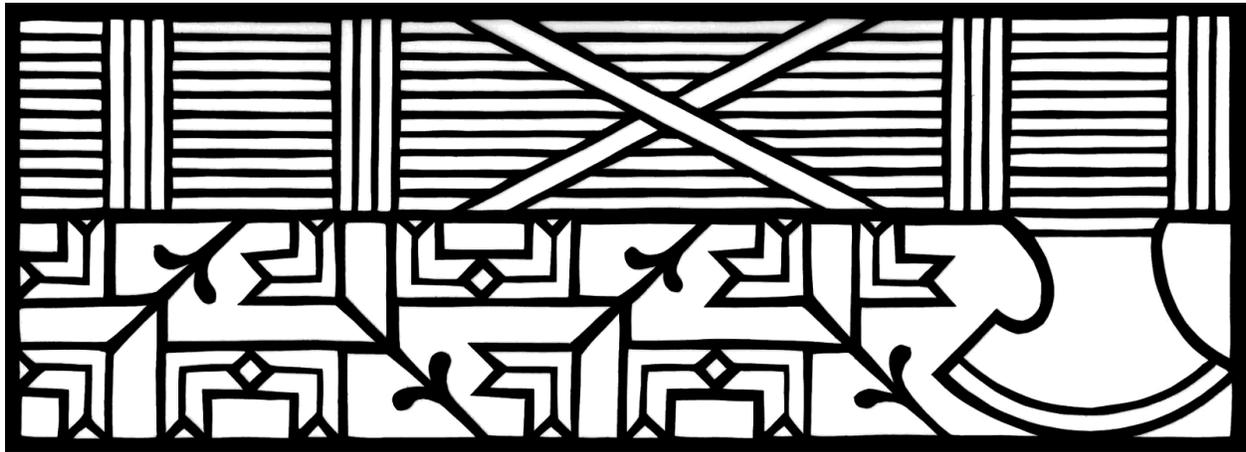


Figure 1: Fasces and flowers. Force and signification. *Ratio et elocutio*. The closed fist and the open hand. Empire and rhetoric.

Classical rhetoric, when engaged carefully, is remarkable. It's got power, lust, avarice, slander, philosophy, adultery, humor, treason, ethics, invective, murder, scandal, and redemption. It's also easy to represent poorly, often as a loose collection of obsolete ideas from a couple thousand years ago. My goal is to investigate, with you, classical rhetoric in its material practice: as something that very smart ancient peoples performed, practiced, theorized, researched, lived, and contested.

This seminar uses the concept of empire as a way to investigate the problematic notion of a Western-oriented classical rhetorical tradition and canon. While rhetorics ostensibly rely on persuasion, they are often sustained or advanced by unequal relations of imperial power and domination. This seminar proposes that those unequal relations of power merit investigation: the rhetorical tradition does not exist outside of politics or materiality. For those reasons, this seminar investigates texts from the classical rhetorical tradition in their historical and material contexts, offering participants a thorough familiarity with those texts while at the same time asking participants to complicate problematic traditional notions of rhetorical canonicity.

Learning Outcomes:

- Seminar participants will build familiarity with important texts and theories from the history of classical rhetoric and their contributions to the history of rhetorical study and contested notions of a classical tradition or canon.
- Seminar participants will extend and apply their awareness of how rhetorical practices and theories always influence and are influenced by their historical, political, and material contexts.
- Seminar participants will build expertise in developing publishable substantial scholarly projects on topics in rhetorical studies and so prepare for a successful post-graduation career.

- Seminar participants will professionalize by investigating rhetorical texts and leading discussions of those texts among audiences of their peers both within and beyond the seminar.

Required Texts:

All texts are freely available online, through library databases, e-books, or archival sites for classical primary sources (e.g., the *Perseus Project* at Tufts). Seminar participants should bring or arrange to share a wireless networked computing device each session.

Attendance:

You're responsible and professionalizing graduate students. I understand that life happens, and some circumstances are unavoidable. I ask you to be respectful to your fellow members of the seminar and come to class. It's acceptable to miss up to two if you make arrangements with me beforehand, but more—or more than one unplanned absence—will likely affect your grade.

Academic Integrity:

I enthusiastically and unreservedly encourage collaborative work. I also note that it is never wise to represent someone else's intellectual labor as your own. You will glean many ideas and insights from your colleagues and fellow seminar participants. When you do so in publishable writing, it is often generous practice to thank the source of the idea or insight in a footnote.

Required assignments:

Weekly informal reading responses	10 at 50 points each with lowest 2 dropped	400 points (40%)
Leadership of two lesson discussions, including assigning in-class activities and supplemental readings	2 sessions, about 1 hour each, at 75 points	150 points (15%)
Midterm draft methodological approach, optionally incorporating prose from weekly reading responses	1800–2400 words	200 points (20%)
Final seminar project, incorporating and revising midterm, and optionally incorporating prose from weekly informal reading responses.	3200–4800 words	250 points (25%)

Assignment Detail—Weekly Informal Reading Responses:

I will ask you to write brief informal discussion forum posts and comments on other peoples' posts about the assigned readings. These responses can serve as notes toward your midterm and final project: you're welcome to recycle them into other texts for this class. In terms of grading, there are three fundamental requirements: (1) responses must be at least 400 words long (400–800 words is a good range), (2) they must directly quote specific passages from the reading, and (3) they must move beyond summary to synthesize and raise questions.

Value: 50 points each, lowest 2 dropped (you may write 10 instead of 12, if you prefer)

Assignment Detail—Leadership of Lesson Discussions:

Seminar participants will sign up to lead or co-lead the first half (about 60–75 minutes, or longer, if you're ambitious) of our meetings. Your lesson plans for those meetings will count as your informal reading responses for those weeks. My hope is that you will choose lessons that engage topics related to your interests. In terms of grading, you are responsible (1) for initiating and sustaining discussion for the first half of the meeting (including asking participants to engage in whatever learning activities you like: I encourage you to innovate), and (2) seeking out and making yourself familiar with 1–2 additional secondary sources on that week's reading that will help you build your expertise (you might plan on meeting with me 2–3 weeks beforehand if you'd like guidance or feedback on ideas).

Value: 2 sessions at 75 points each

Assignment Detail—Midterm Draft Methodological Approach:

The midterm assignment is to write a loose, drafty, partial version of your final seminar project, so you and your classmates and I can talk about it in October and have sufficient time to help you develop, draft, and revise it into something brilliant and amazing that I hope might be an early publication for you. Your task here is to say: "Here's what I think I might want to do for the final project, and here's how I want to do it," and to be at least a third of the way (or thereabouts) toward completing the final seminar project. As with the final seminar project, you are absolutely welcome to incorporate wholesale (i.e., copy and paste) passages from your informal reading responses, and to quote and cite your classmates. In terms of grading, it must (1) discuss, quote, and cite a focused set of readings from the seminar, (2) discuss and cite at least 1–2 secondary sources relating to those readings, and (3) be at least 1800 words long, and maybe even closer to 2400 words if you want to save yourself some end-of-semester work.

Value: 200 points

Assignment Detail—Final Seminar Project:

Write a close-to-publishable 3200–4800 word partial draft of an article on a topic related to the work of the seminar. Good examples of such scholarly work are in Xenos from 9/22, Merlan from 9/29, Leen from 10/20, Corbett from 11/3, and Barnes from 11/17. The rigor and inventiveness of the chapters from Bartsch are exemplary as well. You are welcome to incorporate wholesale (i.e., cut and paste) passages from your informal reading responses, and to quote and cite your classmates. Your final seminar project should revise and extend your midterm.

Value: 250 points

Sequence of Lessons (required readings are in *boldface italics*):

Part 1: Critical Framework

8/25: Reading portions of *Plato's Phaedrus* in class. Identification of translations and editions of classical texts. Group work brainstorming and identifying key terms and their connections to the history of rhetoric (e.g., ethnicity, performance, nationalism, literacy, power, subjectivity, geography, class, technology, gender, domesticity). *Gratian is named co-emperor of Rome at the age of 8 in CE367.*

9/1: *Quintilian* and the difficulty of the good man speaking well under mortal threat. *Tacitus* and historiography as rhetoric under empire. The relationship between force and rhetoric: the closed fist and the open hand. *Odoacer deposes Romulus Augustulus in CE476*.

9/8: *Quintilian's* role under the terror of Domitian. *Tacitus* and the function of material context in the study of rhetorical history and theory. Historical representations of women and family roles under empire. *Praetorian Guard murders Aurelian in CE275*.

Part 2: The Early Greeks

9/15: *Isocrates and the Panathenaicus* on the literacy of the Spartans after the Peloponnesian wars. Gorgias and historical justifications for war. *Plato's Gorgias*. The *Encomium of Helen*. Sexism in the rhetorical imagination. *Tiberius becomes Princeps in CE14*.

9/22: Socrates teaching the tyrants Critias and Alcibiades. Plato's account of Socrates in the *Crito*. Rhetoric and the justification of state power. *The Trial of Socrates*. Revisiting the *Phaedrus*. Aspasia and women in rhetoric. Elitism in excerpts from Plato's *Republic*. Empire and the problems posed by the conspiracy-theoretic work of Leo Strauss.

9/29: *Aristotle's rhetorical theory*. Aristotle's tutelage of Alexander, Aristotle's xenophobia, Aristotle's encouragement toward conquest, and Alexander's mortal threats toward his former tutor. The Macedonian wars and Greece's defeat by Rome at Corinth. Rhetoric and the transition of power from Greece to Rome. *Alexander defeats Darius III in the Hellenic League's invasion of the Persian empire in BCE331*.

Part 3: The Early Romans

10/6: The interregnum, war, and the absence of public rhetoric. Rome annexes Greek rhetorical traditions. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and *De Inventione*. Cicero's *Pro Roscio Amerino* and the dictator's friends. Terror under Sulla; armies march on Rome. *Midterm draft methodological approach due: what problems will you investigate, and how will you do so?*

10/13: Cicero's early career. Excerpts from the orations against *Catiline* and *Verres*. Oratory and politics in the republic. "I threw dust in the jury's eyes" in the *Pro Cluentio*: Nietzsche ("*On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense*") and lies in rhetoric. *De Oratore* part 1.

10/20: Fall of the Republic. Pompey, force and audience. Performance in excerpts from the *Pro Milone*. Cicero's *Pro Caelio*. Domesticity and misogyny in the address to Clodia. Prosopopoeiae. Catullus. *De Oratore* part 2. *Second battle of Philippi in BCE42*.

Part 4: Force and Empire

10/27: Cicero and Caesar in the early empire. The rhetorical leverage of the *Pro Ligario*: how Cicero offered Caesar, as judge and plaintiff, the roles of *iudex* and *dictator*. *Agamben* and the *Campus Martius* as state of exception. *Brutus*. *Praetorian Guard forces Nerva to adopt Caesar Trajanus (later Trajan, the first of the four "good" emperors) as his successor in CE97*.

11/3: Cicero's *Philippics* against Mark Antony. Cicero's assassination. Fulvia and women's roles. *Romulus Augustulus, the last of the Western emperors, appointed to power in CE475*.

11/10: Rhetorics of *Seneca the Elder* as *progymnasmata*. Rhetoric as ornament after the reign of Augustus. The decline of rhetoric. The sack of Rome.

11/17: Tacitus and historiography revisited. The *Dialogus de Oratoribus* and the problems of textual lacunae. Imperial power; Tacitus and Cicero. Nero's theatricality. *Army appoints Diocletian emperor in CE284; Diocletian draws his sword and slays vice principis Aper.*

Part 5: Wrap-up

12/1: No readings assigned. Presentation of abstracts and workshopping final projects. *Cicero delivers the final Catilinarian oration in BCE63.*

12/8: Exam week. Final projects due.

Detailed List of Assigned Readings and Useful Resources:

While they require some care and attention, these readings are (with an occasional rare exception) not very dense: with dense or technical material, I typically assign 70–90 pages per week, but because this material is somewhat more accessible, we'll be working through the equivalent of 80–100 pages per week. In weeks when there are major assignments due (10/9, 12/4, 12/11), there will be much less reading assigned. In addition to the materials listed here, I hope you might seek other translations and resources and share them with the seminar.

8/25 (in class): Plato's *Phaedrus* (whole class reads 227A–228E, small teams break up to read 258A–270E and 270E–279C and report back).

Phaedrus, Harold Fowler 1925 translation, with notes on Greek usage

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=plat.+phaedrus>

Phaedrus, Benjamin Jowett 1892 translation, with commentary

<http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/111>

Guide to Plato's *Phaedrus*

<http://www.english.hawaii.edu/criticalink/plato/index.html>

Homework to read to prepare for 9/1's meeting: Tacitus, *Historiae* (I, III), *Agricola* (sections 29–36, 40–45); Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* (I.1, I.2, II.1, II.4, II.16).

[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Histories_\(Tacitus\)/Book_1](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Histories_(Tacitus)/Book_1)

[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Histories_\(Tacitus\)/Book_3](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Histories_(Tacitus)/Book_3)

<http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Agricola>

Institutes of Oratory, 1856 John Selby Watson translation

<http://eserver.org/rhetoric/quintilian/>

Institutes of Oratory, 1920 H. E. Butler translation

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Quintilian/Institutio_Oratoria/

Homework to read to prepare for 9/8's meeting: Tacitus, *Annales* (I, VI); Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* (X.1, XII.1).

[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Annals_\(Tacitus\)/Book_1](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Annals_(Tacitus)/Book_1)

[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Annals_\(Tacitus\)/Book_6](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Annals_(Tacitus)/Book_6)

Institutes of Oratory, 1856 John Selby Watson translation

<http://eserver.org/rhetoric/quintilian/>

Institutes of Oratory, 1920 H. E. Butler translation

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Quintilian/Institutio_Oratoria/

Homework to read to prepare for 9/15's meeting: Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*; Isocrates, *Panathenaicus* (sections 5–42, 47–48, 62–70, 200–210, 239–253); Plato, *Gorgias*.

<http://www.classicpersuasion.org/pw/gorgias/helendonovan.htm>

[http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0144%3Aspeech%3D12)

[doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0144%3Aspeech%3D12](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0144%3Aspeech%3D12)

<https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/p/plato/p71g/gorgias.html>

Homework to read to prepare for 9/22's meeting: Finish Plato, *Phaedrus* (whichever sections you didn't read, including especially the two speeches on love); Plato, *Crito*; I. F. Stone's account of the trial of Socrates; Plato, a short excerpt from *Menexenus* (236e–246a); Plato, excerpts from *The Republic* Chapters 2, 3, 5, and 8 (357a–366e, 371e–377d, 388e–389e, 449a–457d, 543a–???: aristocracy); Nicholas Xenos, “Leo Strauss and the Rhetoric of the War on Terror.”

Phaedrus, Harold Fowler 1925 translation, with notes on Greek usage

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=plat.+phaedrus>

Phaedrus, Benjamin Jowett 1892 translation, with commentary

<http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/111>

Guide to Plato's *Phaedrus*

<http://www.english.hawaii.edu/criticalink/plato/index.html>

<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/crito.html>

<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/socrates/ifstoneinterview.html>

<http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0059.tlg028.perseus-eng1>

<http://data.perseus.org/texts/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0059.tlg030.perseus-eng1>

<http://www.logosjournal.com/xenos.pdf>

Homework to read to prepare for 9/29's meeting: Aristotle, *Rhetoric* (I.1–3, 8, 10–12; II.1–3, 12–14, 17–19, skim intros of 4–11; III.1, 2, 5, 7, 13); Philip Merlan, “Isocrates, Aristotle, and Alexander the Great” (in JSTOR); first ten paragraphs of *UNRV History's* entry on “Macedonia;” *Pothos* entry on Callisthenes.

<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/rhetoric.html>

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4434381>

<http://www.unrv.com/provinces/macedonia.php>

<http://www.pothos.org/content/index.php?page=callisthenes>

Homework to read to prepare for 10/6's meeting: pseudo-Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (I.1–I.3, III.16–III.23, IV.1–IV.2, IV.52–IV.56); Cicero, *de Inventione* (I.1–I.3, I.7, II.2–II.3); Cicero, *Pro Roscio Amerino*; Plutarch, *Life of Sulla* (paragraphs 31–34).

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Rhetorica_ad_Herennium/

<http://classicpersuasion.org/pw/cicero/dnv1-1.htm>

http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/For_Sextus_Roscius_of_Ameria

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Sulla*.html

Homework to read to prepare for 10/13's meeting: Cicero, excerpts from *In Verrem* (I.1.1–11; II.4.1–10), *In Catilinam* (First Oration), excerpts from *De Oratore* (Book I, sections 1–69), *Pro*

Cluentio (Sections 1–17 and 69–71 / I–XVII and LXIX–LXXI); Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* (II.17); Nietzsche, “On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense.”

http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Against_Verres/First_pleading
http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Against_Verres/Second_pleading/Book_4
<http://www.bartleby.com/268/2/11.html>
http://pages.pomona.edu/~cmc24747/sources/cic_web/de_or_1.htm
http://www.uah.edu/student_life/organizations/SAL/texts/latin/classical/cicero/procluentio1e.html
<http://imrl.usu.edu/6890/OnTruthandLies.pdf>

Homework to read to prepare for 10/20's meeting: Cicero, excerpts from *De Oratore* (Book I, sections 118–128, 213–226; Book III, sections 1–8, 17–19, 44–45, 199–201), excerpts from *Pro Milone* (Introduction, Chapters 1–7, 9–14, 18–21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 31–38); *Pro Caelio* (entire oration); Catullus, *Carminae* 11, 49, 79; Anne Leen, “*Clodia Oppugnatrix: The Domus Motif in Cicero's Pro Caelio*” (in JSTOR).

http://pages.pomona.edu/~cmc24747/sources/cic_web/de_or_1.htm
http://pages.pomona.edu/~cmc24747/sources/cic_web/de_or_3.htm
http://www.uah.edu/student_life/organizations/SAL/texts/latin/classical/cicero/promilone.html
<http://www.hoocher.com/procaeliotranslation.htm>
<http://rudynegenborn.net/catullus/text2/e11.htm>
<http://rudynegenborn.net/catullus/text2/e49.htm>
<http://rudynegenborn.net/catullus/text2/e79.htm>
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3298121>

Homework to read to prepare for 10/26's meeting: Cicero, excerpts from *Brutus* (sections 1–59, 89, 133–155, 204–219, 279–333 [end]); Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* Chapter 1; Cicero, *Pro Ligario* (entire oration).

<http://www.attalus.org/old/brutus1.html>
<http://www.attalus.org/old/brutus2.html>
<http://www.attalus.org/old/brutus3.html>
<http://www.attalus.org/old/brutus4.html>
<http://www.didierbigo.com/students/readings/IPS2011/5/Agamben%20state%20of%20exception%20ch1.pdf>
<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.02.0020:text=Lig.>

Homework to read to prepare for 11/3's meeting: Nancy Myers, “Cicero's [S]Trumpet: Roman Women and the Second Philippic” (in JSTOR); Cicero, excerpts from the *Orator* addressed to Marcus Brutus (I–IX, XIV–XVII, XIX–XXV, XXVII–XXVIII, XXIII), *Philippicae* 2 & 7; Edward P. J. Corbett, “The Rhetoric of the Open Hand and the Rhetoric of the Closed Fist” (in JSTOR).

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20058090>
http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/734#lf0043-04_head_034
http://lexundria.com/cic_phil/2/y
http://lexundria.com/cic_phil/7/y
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/355032>

Homework to read to prepare for 11/10's meeting: Shadi Bartsch, *Actors in the Audience* Chapter 1; Michael Winterbottom, Introduction to Seneca the Elder's *Declamations*; Seneca the Elder, *Controversiae* I and VII, *Suasoriae* VI.

http://bit.ly/ENGL509_Bartsch1

http://bit.ly/Winterbottom_Intro

http://bit.ly/Controversiae_I

http://bit.ly/Controversiae_VII

http://bit.ly/Suasoriae_VI

Homework to read to prepare for 11/17's meeting: Shadi Bartsch, *Actors in the Audience* Chapter 4; Tacitus, *Dialogus de Oratoribus*; T. D. Barnes, "The Significance of Tacitus's *Dialogus de Oratoribus*" (in JSTOR).

http://bit.ly/ENGL509_Bartsch_4

http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dialogue_on_Orators

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/311472>

Useful Resources:

Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg, eds., *The Rhetorical Tradition*

Gideon Burton, *Silva Rhetoricae* (<http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>)

M. L. Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome*

Edward P. J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*

Sharon Crowley and Debra Hawhee, *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*

Richard Leo Enos, *Roman Rhetoric: Revolution and the Greek Influence*

Cheryl Glenn, *Rhetoric Retold: Regendering the Tradition*

Susan Jarratt, *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Refigured*

George Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric*

Richard Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*

Andrea Lunsford, *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition*

John Poulakos and Takis Poulakos, *Classical Rhetorical Theory*